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101ST CONGRESS
2d Session

SENATE

REPORT
101-354

STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY OF AN UMBRELLA RESEARCH ARM TO SUPPORT RESEARCH ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

JUNE 28 (legislative day, JUNE 11), 1990.—Ordered to be printed

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Mr. BURDICK, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2371]

The Committee on Environment and Public Works, to which was referred the bill (S. 2371) to direct the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study of the feasibility of an umbrella research arm to support research on a variety of environmental issues, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

GENERAL STATEMENT

This legislation authorizes a National Academy of Sciences study on the feasibility of establishing an independent agency—the National Institutes for Environmental Research—to support research and training in environmental science. These missions would be accomplished through intramural and extramural research activities, including competitive grants to institutions that support interdisciplinary research and investigator-initiated proposals.

The Academy is directed to report to Congress within 12 months of enactment with recommendations regarding mechanisms to advance environmental research and training. The report should cover the relationship of any new agency to existing government and private research entities, as well as appropriate levels and sources of funding. $500,000 is authorized for the study.

39-010

S323-10

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The academic community has become increasingly critical of the research and development program within the Environmental Protection Agency. Several observers have drawn attention to perceived flaws in the agency's long-range, anticipatory research program, and many scientists are calling for an alternative structure to support these endeavors.

In 1988, the Research Strategies Committee of the EPA Science Advisory Board reported to Administrator Lee Thomas with ten recommendations for improving the agency's research program. The study, often called the "Alm Report" after Committee chairman and former Deputy Administrator Al Alm, concluded that:

> A strategic shift in emphasis from control and cleanup to anticipation and prevention is absolutely essential to our future physical, environmental, and economic health.

The Alm Report called for greater emphasis on long-range basic research, in addition to the research needed to satisfy the agency's more immediate regulatory needs. In addition to recommending that EPA's R&D budget be doubled over a five year period, the report recommended that agency establish and fund an "Environmental Research Institute" dedicated to fundamental ecological research.

The study authorized by S. 2371 will assess the present state of extramural environmental research and the feasibility of creating a National Institutes for Environmental Research. Should a consensus develop behind the need for creation of an independent research agency, the study will provide information to allow an informed decision to be made among structural alternatives.

During the full Committee's hearing on S. 2371 on April 24, Erich Bretthauer, the Assistant EPA Administrator for Research and Development, testified on behalf of the administration and indicated that he had reservations about the bill. However, in a clarifying letter to Chairman Burdick dated May 3, 1990, Mr. Bretthauer stated that the administration supports S. 2371 as introduced.

HEARINGS

A hearing on S. 2371 was conducted by the full Committee on Environment and Public Works on April 24, 1990, in Washington, D.C. The following witnesses testified at that hearing: Senator Bradley, Congressman Saxton, representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Society for Conservation Biology, and the Committee for the National Institutes for the Environment.

ROLLCALL VOTES

Section 7(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate and the rules of the Committee on Environment and Public Works require that any rollcall votes taken during consideration of this bill be announced in this report.

The bill was ordered reported on June 12, 1990 by unanimous voice vote.

COST OF LEGISLATION

Section 403 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act requires each bill to contain a statement of the cost of such bill prepared by the Congressional Budget Office. That statement follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, June 20, 1990.

Hon. QUENTIN N. BURDICK,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the attached cost estimate for S. 2371, a bill to direct the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study of the feasibility of an umbrella research arm to support research on a variety of environmental issues.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them.

Sincerely,

ROBERT D. REISCHAUER, *Director.*

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE—COST ESTIMATE

1. Bill number: S. 2371.
2. Bill title: A bill to direct the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study of the feasibility of an umbrella research arm to support research on a variety of environmental issues.
3. Bill status: As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, June 12, 1990.
4. Bill purpose: S. 2371 would require the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to prepare, within one year after enactment, a report to the Congress on the feasibility and need for establishing a research arm devoted to environmental issues.
5. Estimated cost to the Federal Government:

[By fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Authorization level	0.5				
Estimated outlays	0.5				

Basis of estimate: To fund the required study S. 2371 would authorize the appropriation of $500,000. This estimate assumes that the full amount authorized would be appropriated for fiscal year 1991 and that the study would be completed during the year.

6. Estimated cost to State and local governments: None.
7. Estimate comparison: None.
8. Previous CBO estimate. None.
9. Estimate prepared by: Michael Sieverts.
10. Estimate approved by: C.G. Nuckols (for James L. Blum, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis).

REGULATORY IMPACT

Section 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate require the Committee to evaluate the regulatory impact of the reported bill.

This bill will not impose any new regulatory burden.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

Section (4) of rule XXIX of the Standing Rules of the Senate requires the Committee to any changes in existing law from the reported bill.

This bill will not impose any existing laws.

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